

VOCABULARY TEACHING IN A LANGUAGE LEARNING PROCESS

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With the development of the communicative method in language teaching the role of vocabulary as well as of reading is on the increase.

There are three possible ways in which vocabulary teaching can fit into a language learning process. Most courses make use of all the three but the amount of time allocated to each of these ways depends on the understanding of how language is best learned. The first case is when language-learning materials are prepared with vocabulary learning as consideration. The most common examples of these are the preparation of simplified material and the careful vocabulary grading of the first lessons of English. The second case describes the situation when words are dealt with as they happen to occur. If an unknown word appears in a reading passage, the teacher pays some attention to it at the moment it causes a problem. And the third case is when vocabulary is taught in connection with other language activities. For example, the vocabulary of a reading passage is dealt with before the students read the passage.

Though different ways of presenting vocabulary exist, the most effective one is through reading because it presupposes the use of discovery techniques. In her book “Teaching and Learning in the Language Classroom” Hedge defines discovery techniques as those “where students have to work out the rules and meanings for themselves rather than being given everything by the teacher” [2]. They are aimed at the development of language guess, communicative abilities, self-monitoring rather than the use of translatory methods. When students interact with texts, their reading comprehension improves. Hence, they become critical readers.

Texts are useful for focusing on specific words for active study. Extensive reading provides the opportunity to meet words in their context of use and also supplies repeated encounters with many of these words. Ideally students should have

the opportunity to choose the kinds of texts they are going to read. Narrow reading is reading around the same topic over the course of a number of texts. In this way learners become more familiar with the topic, which in turn makes reading easier and students come across the same vocabulary used repeatedly [3] . This type of reading is commonly used in ESP teaching.

When considering what to do about the unknown vocabulary in a reading text, the teacher needs to decide what the purpose of the class is. If the purpose of the class is to develop reading skills or to master the content of a reading text, then vocabulary work should be speedy and brief so that the students are not distracted from the purpose of the class. If the purpose of the class is to develop learners' reading vocabulary, then the teacher can afford to spend some time on particular vocabulary and on vocabulary learning strategies.

Good readers use what they know about language and the world to interact with what they are reading. This helps them create meaning from the words. Activities that encourage interaction with texts, like direct activities related to texts (DARTs) improve students' reading comprehension and make them critical readers. They can be done by individual students or in groups [1]. DARTs can be divided into two groups: reconstruction activities and analysis activities.

Reconstruction activities require students to reconstruct a text or diagram by filling in missing words, phrases or sentences, or by sequencing text that has been jumbled. For example, text completion (*Fill in missing words or phrases*), sequencing (*Arrange the jumbled segments of the text in a logical or time sequence*), grouping (*Group segments of the text according to categories*), table completion (*Provide row and column headings where the cells have already been filled in*), diagram completion (*Complete an unfinished diagram*), prediction activities (*Write the next step or stage of a text, or end the text*).

Analysis activities require students to find and categorize information by marking or labeling a text. For example, text marking (*Find and underline parts of the text that have a particular meaning or contain particular information*), text segmenting and labeling (*Break the text into meaningful chunks and label each*

chunk), questioning (*Answer the teacher's questions or develop questions about the text*), summarizing [3].

DARTs can be based on extracts from magazines, newspapers, passages from history, geography, science, and textbooks.

Experience in vocabulary teaching suggests that students remember best when they have actually done something with the words they are learning. There is a definite advantage in getting students to do more than just repeat them. Tasks such as changing them to mean their opposites, making a noun an adjective, putting words together help to fix the words in the learners' mind.

The problem of vocabulary acquisition should be systematically addressed by both teachers and students. Increasing learners' vocabulary without paying attention to putting this knowledge to use may not be effective.

Literature:

1. I.S.P. Nation Teaching and Learning Vocabulary. — Boston, Heinle & Heinle Publishers, 1990.
2. Hedge, T. Teaching and Learning in the Language Classroom / T. Hedge. — Oxford University Press, New York, 2002.
3. Thornbury, S. How to Teach Vocabulary / S. Thornbury. — Longman, 2002.